

Special Post-Season Edition



The Cowd



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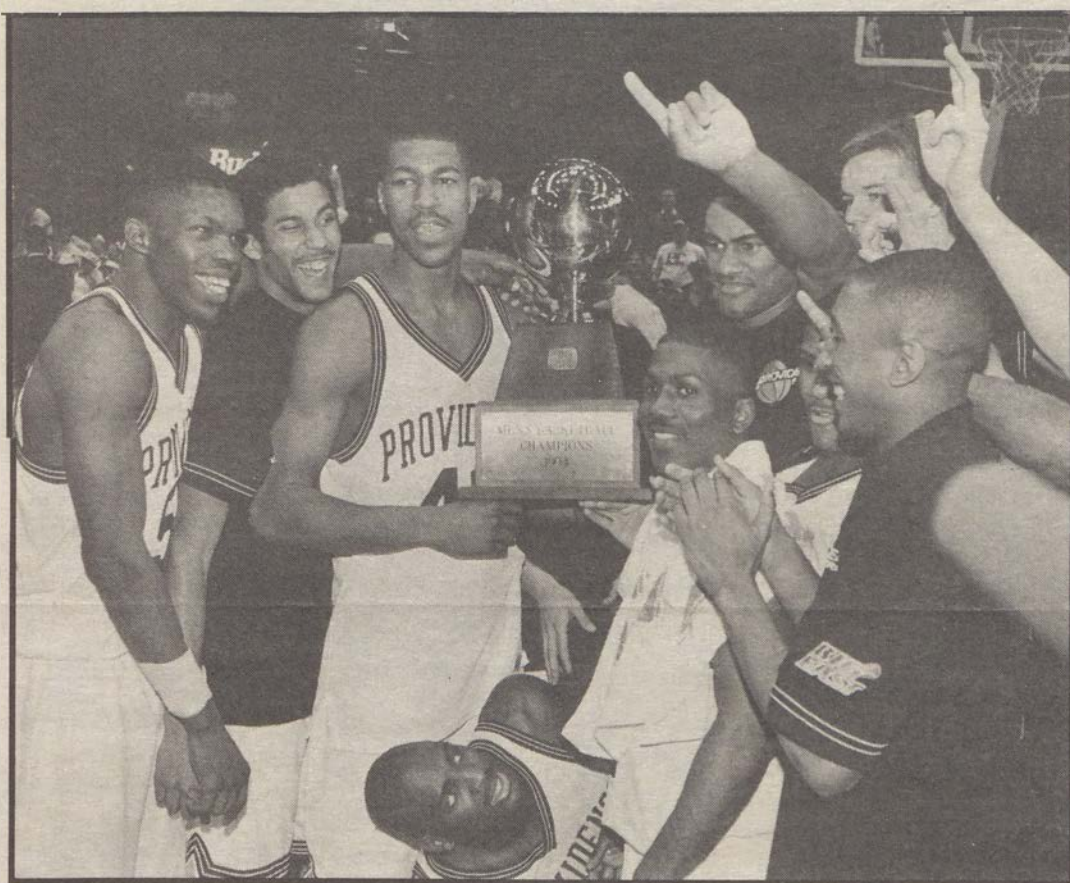
Providence College - Providence, Rhode Island

March 28, 1994

WOW!!

Friars Win First Ever Big East Championship

by Justin Macione '95
Assistant Sports Editor



The new Big East Champions celebrate after knocking off Georgetown in the title game.

in)", referring to last year's snub.

Fortunately Barnes and his troops didn't have to go to extremes, but Saturday's semifinal feat proved to be almost as amazing; defeating the #2 ranked University of Connecticut Huskies 69-67.

Following Friday's thrashing of St. Johns, the Huskies looked unstoppable. Donyell Marshall had just ripped the Redmen for a tournament record 42 points. Who would step up for the Friars on Saturday? Try the oft-maligned Simpkins and Rob Phelps.

The focus of huge expectations since his arrival, Phelps was forced into the role of defensive stopper, a result of his season long scoring slump. However, Phelps, the senior scorer re-emerged on Saturday, lighting up the New York skyline with 10 for 11 shooting, including 3 treys, for 23 points. "I go into games now thinking more defensively than I ever have and it seems to help things come together offensively," analyzed the underrated sixth man.

In the box score, the casual fan will be pleased with 20 point game by Simpkins, another solid performer who has faced unrealistic expectations. Yet, if it weren't for Simpkins pressuring Donyell Marshall the entire game and holding him to 19 points, the 20 points would have been just another statistic in a PC loss. Barnes deferred credit for the defensive performance: "I thought that in our past games I had done too much coaching. I told Dickey you're the guy that has to guard him, do it anyway you want to."

Trailing by a 29-28 score at the half, the Friars started the second with an 8-0 run. This would be the preview for PC's 68% second half shooting. Although the Friars never lost the lead again, UCONN was almost always challenging.

With 31 seconds remaining, Doron Sheffer's foot nicked the 3 point line on a long range jumper, helping the Friars retain a 68-67 lead. Possibly, the most cru-

Only a couple of weeks ago, the Providence College Friars were struggling to keep their heads above water. Faced with a 7th place 5-8 Big East record, Friar fanatics echoed comments such as "These seniors have really disappointed" or "This team is going nowhere!"

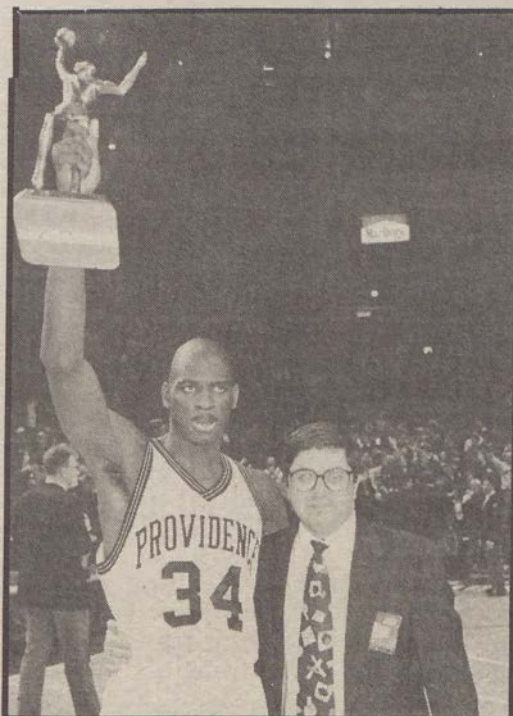
In response to this criticism, the Friars rapped off a five game season ending win streak. After their March 7, 73-69 overtime thriller against the Georgetown Hoyas, talk of disappointment quickly switched to talk of the NCAA bubble.

This newfound optimism was somewhat tempered by the reality that the Friars were about to enter the house of horrors for PC basketball: The Big East Tournament. Turning their backs on a 6-14 tourney record, PC's 1994 edition summarily turned the Madison Square garden into a second home court by capturing their first ever tournament championship.

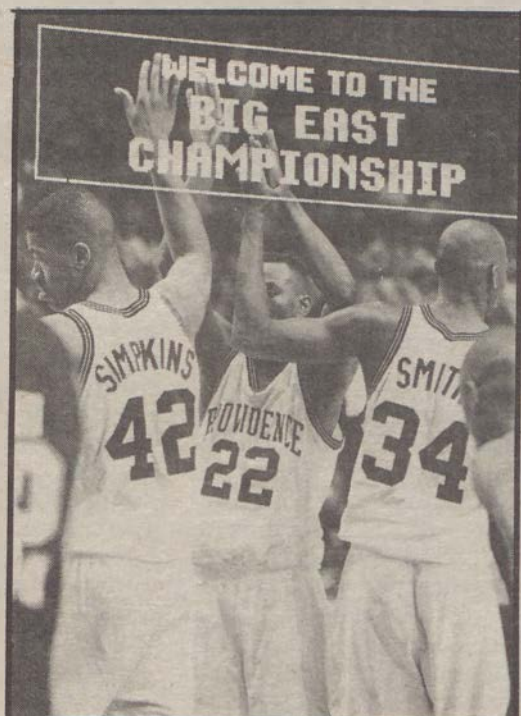
The road to the finals began at high noon on Friday with a clash against the Villanova Wildcats. A victory would virtually assure the NCAA tournament bid which had eluded the Friars last March.

PC broke out to an early lead, spearheaded by Eric Williams' hot shooting. When the Wildcats converged on Williams, senior power forward Michael Smith assumed control of the contest, amassing 25 points and 12 rebounds for the game. With Smith, Dickey Simpkins, and Austin Croshere overmatching the Wildcats on the glass, point guard Abdul Abdullah smoothly directed the offense. An unexpected 10 point first half from Croshere also keyed the 77-66 victory.

Following the game a relaxed Abdullah commented, "A lot of the time, my teammates and myself weren't on the same page, but that changed as the game went on." Feeling a bit more comfortable about PC's postseason hopes, coach Barnes added comic relief to the situation; "We might pull a Nancy Kerrigan/Tonya Harding thing on the NCAA committee (if we don't get



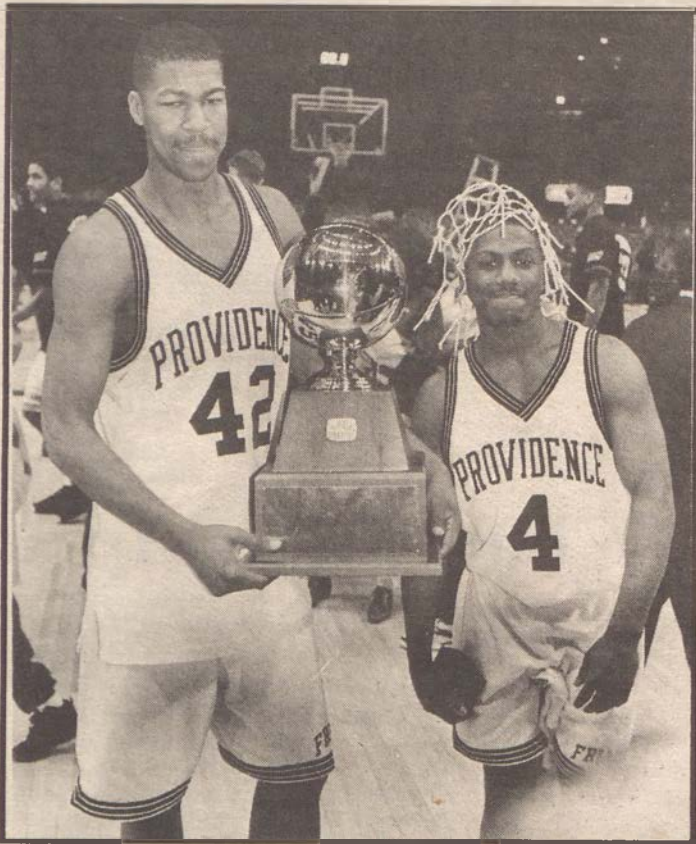
Michael Smith hoists his tournament MVP trophy with Big East Commissioner Michael Tranghese.



Three numbers that won't soon be forgotten at Providence: #42 Dickey Simpkins, #22 Rob Phelps, and #34 Michael Smith.

see: Big East Champs
on page 2

Special Edition



Seniors Dickey Simpkins and Abdul Abdullah display the Big East Championship trophy (Abdul also shows off his newest headgear).

Big East Champs: continued from page 1

cial play of the game occurred when Smith held onto the rebound of a Simpkins foul shot at 19:53, preventing a good final Husky shot. Thanks to the combined senior effort, the uprising was repelled, and PC would advance to their first Big East final.

"These were the two guys that we wanted to do this for," added Abdullah. Following the thriller, the crowd watched Georgetown outmuscle an undermanned Seton Hall club for the second spot in the finals.

Ugly was the best adjective for Sunday's game as well, synonymous with the Hoya pressure defense. If it weren't for PC's first-ever title hopes, this game could be considered anti-climactic. Nevertheless, Smith, aiding the double-teamed Eric Williams, paced the Friars to a 31-27 first half lead with 10 points and 9 rebounds.

In the end, this game depended on a former PC malady: free throws. Thanks to the 22 team fouls and 3 technicals called on Georgetown, the Friars reached the charity stripe 40 times in the second half. The fact that PC converted 29 foul shots combined with the foul troubles of George Butler and Othella Harrington helped seal their first Big East Championship. Fresh off another stellar 15 point performance, Phelps emerged victorious in a

scramble for the game ball, a memento of the Brooklyn natives coming home party; "I wanted that ball real bad, and get my teammates to sign it. A lot of people have been down on me and there have been a lot of critics, so this is a nice sign (of my success)."

Phelps and Simpkins also had all-tourney team selections to add to their memories, in addition to the tournament MVP award for Smith. Simpkins summed things up best after the celebration: "Today, all the hard work and everything we've been through for the last 4 years paid off by winning the Big East Championship."

NCAA First Round ALABAMA 76 PROVIDENCE 70

Providence

Smith 4-9 2-3 10, Williams 12-22 3-7 27, Simpkins 1-5 0-0 2, Abdullah 1-5 0-3 3, Brown 4-9 2-2 13, Phelps 5-13 0-0 14, Croshore 0-1 1-2 1.

Alabama

Faulkner 8-15 2-4 20, Caffey 3-7 0-0 6, Orange 6-9 3-4 20, Griffin 2-6 0-1 4, Peck-Love 4-8 3-5 12, McDyess 5-9 1-1 11, Rogers 0-1 0-0 0, Pitts 1-2 1-2 3, Bethel 0-1 0-0 0.

Providence 33-37: 70

Alabama 38-38: 76

3 Pt. Goals- PC: Phelps 4, Brown 3, Abdullah UA: Orange 5, Faulkner 2, Peck-Love 1. Rebs- PC: 30 (Smith 10) UA: 44 (McDyess 12). Assists- PC: 17 (Abdullah 10) UA: 15 (Orange 5). TO- PC: 15 UA: 22.

High Tide Sinks Friars

NCAA Hopes End With Disappointing Loss To Alabama

by Matt Mlodzinski '94
Sports Editor

The Big Dance. The Providence College Friars had finally made it to the NCAA Tournament. They had sealed their way into the tourney by winning PC's first-ever Big East Championship. Now the Friars hoped to ride the momentum of the Big East title and an eight game winning streak to a run in the NAAs. Their first hurdle was the Alabama Crimson Tide in a first round match-up in Lexington, Kentucky.

Unfortunately for the Friars, the magic that lifted the team to the Big East crown just wasn't there. Alabama made the Friars trip to Lexington a short one with a 76-70 victory that ended not only the season, but the Rick Barnes era at Providence College.

Eric Williams scored a game-high 27 points for the Friars, who also got 14 from Rob Phelps and 13 from Michael Brown. Alabama was led by Jamal Faulkner and Marvin Orange who each hit for 20.

It was the wrong night for everything to go wrong for PC, but just about everything did. Granted, Alabama shot the ball extremely well all game. In the first half, the Tide shot 60% from the field with guard Marvin Orange going 5-6 from three point land. But the Friars were undone by the exact things that won the Big East title just four days before. What cost PC this ballgame?

1. The Friars came out looking a little shaky defensively and that translated into wide open looks for the Alabama sharpshooters. It was way too easy for the Tide's perimeter men to get free and Coach Barnes chalked that up to the PC defense (or lack thereof). "We were tentative on defense and we didn't do the things we normally do. We were not aggressive when we needed to be and we just weren't aggressive on defense." Unfortunately, the Friars never tightened up the defensive screws to where they needed to be. Dickey Simpkins said it best: "We didn't play PC basketball."

2. The Friars were killed in the second half by a 6:11 scoring drought which saw a 51-50 Alabama lead (at the 10:39 mark) jump to 61-50 with five minutes left in the game. "We were struggling to score and took a couple of bad shots down the stretch," Barnes said. Michael Smith added that the Friars "dug ourselves a hole and it was too late at the end."

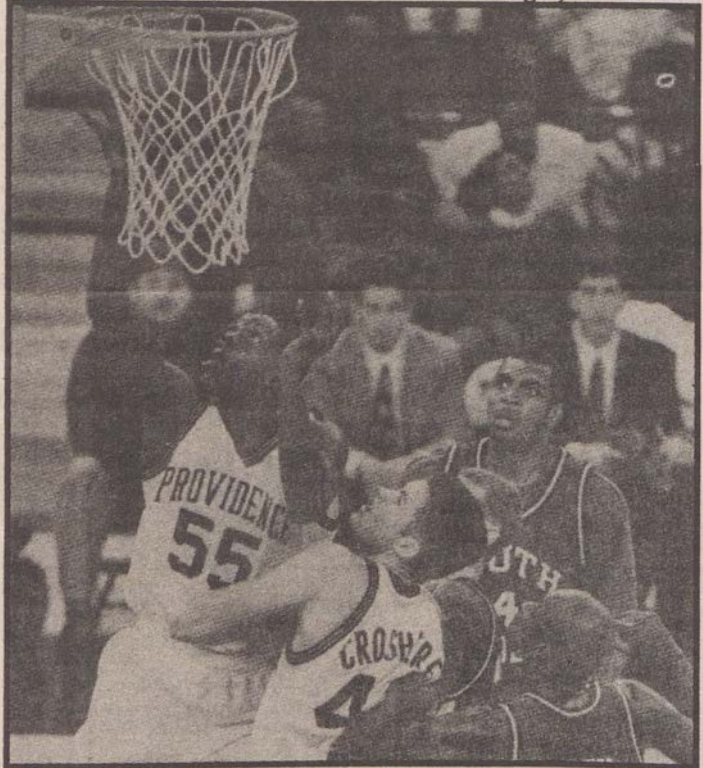
Not only did PC struggle here with their shooting, but certain players labored all game long. Simpkins, who was at the top of his game at the Big Easts, shot only 1-5 from the field and never got into the game at all. Rob Phelps shot a mere 5-13, but was able to hit 4 out his 7 three point attempts (for 14 points). Eric Williams was PC's only consistent threat, twisting inside for 12-22 shooting en route to his 27 points. Probably the surest omen that this one wasn't meant to be was an open lay-up by Phelps in the second half that seemed to be through the net, but improbably spun out and into Alabama's hands.

PC was also atrocious from the free throw

there when they needed it most.

PC only lost by six with Alabama playing terrific and the Friars playing badly. Play this game the next night and PC may have won by ten. That's the hardest pill to swallow about this loss. The Friars didn't play the brand of basketball that won eight straight games for them. They didn't go down playing their best basketball and that's what made the loss so tough to take. The post-game locker room scene was a far cry from the Madison Square Garden jubilation earlier in the week. The players knew that their season ended with one of their worst played games of the year.

Things just weren't



Eric Williams' 27 points and 7 rebounds made him one of PC's few bright spots against Alabama.

line all game long. In a season that saw PC improve immensely on their free throw shooting from past years, their season ended with an ugly 8-17 performance at the charity stripe. A costly nine misses in an NCAA tournament game.

3. Alabama pounded PC on the backboards by a 44-30 count. In the second half 'Bama grabbed 12 more boards than the Friars (29-17) and cleaned 11 offensive rebounds. In that half, it seemed as though every carom off the rim ended up in Alabama's hands. This game was billed as a battle of physical frontcourt teams and PC seemed to have the advantage when Alabama center Jason Caffey picked up his second personal foul three minutes into the game. But the Friars didn't have that fire in them down low that helped them dominate on the boards during the season. The tenacity that defined them all season wasn't

meant to be on this night. It was a sour ending to the careers of PC's departing seniors. When the players look back on this season they will be able to say proudly that they were the Big East Champions. On this night, however, the Big East Tournament was the furthest thing from their minds.

At the end of the game, Michael Brown was leaving the court with his chin practically on the floor. Michael Smith caught up to him, put his arm around him and said "Keep your chin up!" They left the floor together with Smith's arm supportively on Brown's shoulders. Michael's advice is good for the whole Friar squad: they should keep their chins up. They have a lot to be proud of. They accomplished more than anyone probably thought they could. Anyone, except themselves, that is.

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Special Edition

The Road To The
Big East
Championship

Quarterfinals

March 11

#4 PROVIDENCE 77
#5 VILLANOVA 66

Providence

Smith 11-14 3-4 25,
Williams 3-9 3-6 9, Simpkins 4-6 3-
3 11, Abdullah 1-2 4-6 6, Brown 5-
11 0-0 10, Phelps 2-9 2-2 6,
Croshere 3-4 3-4 10, Zielinski 0-1
0-1 0.

Villanova

Eberz 3-9 0-0 7, Wilson
1-3 1-2 3, Lawson 5-14 8-10 18,
Haynes 2-10 2-2 8, Kittles 8-15 1-2
17, Williams 3-6 5-5 12, Harris 0-2
1-2 1.

Providence 40-37: 77

Villanova 23-43: 66

3 Point Goals- PC:

Croshere VU: Haynes 2, Eberz,
Williams. Rebs- PC: 42 (Smith 12)
VU: 29 (Lawson 11). Assists- PC:
19 (Abdullah 11) VU: 13 (Williams
6). TO- PC: 18 VU: 13 Atten-
dance: 19,544.

Semifinals

March 12

#4 PROVIDENCE 69
#1 UCONN 67

Providence

Smith 3-5 0-0 6,
Williams 4-7 0-0 8, Simpkins 6-10
8-10 20, Abdullah 1-3 0-0 2,
Brown 2-8 2-3 6, Phelps 10-11 0-1
23, Croshere 2-6 0-0 4, Zielinski 0-
3 0-0 0.

Connecticut

Dy. Marshall 3-9 2-2 9,
Dl. Marshall 7-16 3-4 19, Hayward
0-2 4-4 4, Ollie 2-3 3-6 7, Sheffer 3-
11 4-5 11, Knight 0-1 0-0 0, Allen 5-
9 4-4 17, Fair 0-3 0-0 0, Willingham
0-0 0-0 0, Johnson 0-0 0-0 0.

Providence 28-41: 69

Connecticut 29-38: 67

3 Pt. Goals- PC: Phelps 3

Conn: Allen 3, Dl. Marshall 2, Dy.
Marshall, Sheffer. Rebs- PC: 24
(Smith 8) Conn: 41 (Dy. Marshall
9). Assists- PC: 14 (Abdullah 10)
Conn: 14 (Ollie 10). TO- PC: 7
Conn: 11. Attendance: 19,544

Finals

March 13

#4 PROVIDENCE 74
#6 GEORGETOWN 64

Providence

Smith 5-11 6-8 16,
Williams 2-4 10-12 14, Simpkins 4-
13 8-13 16, Abdullah 2-4 0-0 4,
Brown 1-8 7-8 9, Phelps 3-6 7-11
15, Croshere 0-1 0-0 0, Zielinski 0-0
0-0 0.

Georgetown

Churchwell 2-9 1-1 5,
Reid 1-4 0-0 2, Harrington 4-8 3-4
11, Brown 4-12 4-6 13, Butler 6-15
4-5 18, Spencer 2-4 1-3 5, Church
0-1 0-0 0, Jacques 1-8 0-1 3, Millen
1-4 0-0 3, Dia 2-3 0-0 4, Morgan 0-
0 0-0 0, Micoud 0-1 0-0 0.

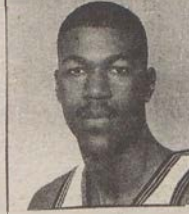
Providence 31-43: 74

Georgetown 27-37: 64

3 Pt. Goals- PC: Phelps 2

GU: Butler 2, Brown, Jacques,
Millen. Rebs- PC: 39 (Smith 16)
GU: 46 (Harrington, Brown 7).
Assists- PC: 14 (Abdullah 9) GU: 7
(Brown 3). TO- PC: 11 GU: 10
Attendance 19,544.1994 Big East
All-Tournament Team

Smith



Simpkins



Phelps



Harrington

Photo
Not
Available

Butler



Marshall

Michael Smith, Providence
Dickey Simpkins, Providence
Rob Phelps, Providence
Othella Harrington, Georgetown
George Butler, Georgetown
Donyell Marshall, UConn
Tournament MVP
Michael Smith, Providence

Still More Bitchings,
Observations, and Opinions
Just Hoops, Baby!by Matt Mlodzinski '94
Sports Editor

Things To Remember
... The Big East Championship. PC's seniors step it up in a big way and silence a lot of critics as the Friars win their first ever crown.

... Despite depleted numbers due to spring break, PC's fans at the Big East Tournament pumped up the volume. Although being outnumbered by about a 15:1 ratio by UConn fans, PC's faithful were just as loud (if not louder) during the semifinal game with the Huskies.

... Michael Smith grabbing a Big East record 26 rebounds as the Friars upset nationally-ranked Syracuse at the Civic Center.

... Abdul Abdullah's buzzer-beater layup against Villanova

... Seeing Abdullah dunk at Midnight Madness. I never thought Abdul had that kind of rise. Then again, I thought UConn, UMass, Kentucky and Louisville would be in the Final Four. Being Polish has its down sides, doesn't it?

... Watching Michael Smith and Michael Brown walking off the court together after the Alabama loss (see article on page 2). This team talked about how they stuck together all season long and seeing these two really drove that point home.

Things to Forget

... The loss to Alabama in the NCAA tournament.
... Arturas Karnishovas' last second three-pointer that beat the Friars at the Meadowlands.

... PC's game at Georgetown which may have been the team's worst played game of the year
... Having to swallow the fact that Franklin Western was on the bench because of injuries. He was red-hot at the beginning of the year but the injury bug bit him badly. Hopefully, he'll be back at 100% next season. His jump from bench warmer to starter in one year is a true testament to Franklin's abilities and is one of the best comebacks in Big East history.

... All this crap that Rob Phelps was a disappointment. Rob never developed into a massive offensive weapon, but he was a consummate team player. He did whatever was asked of him and he always managed to make things happen when he came into the game. Tipping passes, forcing a turnover... you name it. He was probably the team leader in floor burns

and when the team needed him most, he came up huge at the Big East Tournament.

The All-Name Selections
PC's sub-region in Kentucky had some great names in it. The first team: Abdul Abdullah (PC), Shon Peck-Love (Alabama), Ochiel Swaby (Central Florida), Roland Cruickshank (College of Charleston), and Linc Darner (Purdue). We also had fruits (Marvin Orange-'Bama), fast food kings (Roy Rogers-'Bama), and the closest name I've ever heard to a gum disease: Paul Gilvydis of Purdue.

Bad Omens at the NCAA's

Too many little things went wrong before PC's game that may have been indicators that things weren't going to fall my way or the Friars way.

1. My connecting flight from Pittsburgh to Lexington got cancelled. After a re-route through Cincinnati, my scheduled four hour journey became a nine and a half hour fiasco.

2. At the Lexington airport, the shuttle to take me to my hotel blew right past me as I waved futilely to stop him. There's another hour blown waiting for him to come back.

3. On the elevator at my hotel, an elderly lady who was a massive UT Chattanooga fan got all excited when she saw my PC t-shirt. She says: "I've got a real good feeling for you guys and the Mocs (UTC). We're both gonna go out and whip some butt

tonight. You watch! We'll be celebratin' tonight." Thanks for the karma lady. Not only did we lose but UTC lost by 29 points to Kansas

4. The next day as I watched that Kansas- UT Chattanooga game, someone dumped a soda down my left shoe on press row.

5. Alabama's Marvin Orange seemed to be way off the mark during the pre-game shoot around. I laughingly said to myself that if he shoots like that, we'll win by 20. After Orange hit five first half three pointers, I wasn't feeling quite as happy.

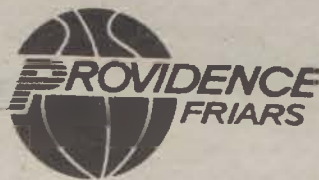
Miscellany

... The Friars frontcourt will be a big strength next year with Eric Williams, Austin Croshere, Western, and the redshirted Troy Brown returning. The backcourt could provide some problems; namely who takes over for Abdul?

... Michael Smith should end up in the NBA next year because he can rebound like a maniac and he constantly has a fire lit in him that will impress the pros.

... St. John's will be incredible very soon after signing Felipe Lopez and Zendon Hamilton. These two have superstar ability from what I've seen and heard. Don't forget that St. John's only major loss will be Shawnelle Scott.

... Bill Raftery is the best color man in the business. He knows his stuff and seems like he's having a blast during every telecast. I turned on the Purdue-Duke game the other day, and heard Greg Gumbel, but the color man wasn't saying anything. All of the sudden Grant Hill hit a bank shot and Raff blurted out his specialty. He simply yelled: "THE KISS!" I vote to give Raff the color job at the Final Four and pop Packer in the studio. Packer is O.K., but Raftery is far too exciting to be stuck in the studio.



Special Edition

Wow Again!!

Lady Friars' Third Straight Crown Proves That They're No Joke

by Matt Mlodzinski '94
Sports Editor

Fresh off of back to back ECAC Championships, the Providence Lady Friars ice hockey team headed into the 1993-94 season much the same as the Chicago Bulls headed into their NBA season: without one of the best players in the world. As the Bulls were without Michael Jordan, the Lady Friars were without superstar Cammi Granato. The graduated senior is quite possibly THE best player in the world. Lose a player like that and there's bound to be a let-down right? Wrong!

The Lady Friars looked as though they never missed a beat as they captured their third consecutive ECAC title. They finished

with an overall record of 19-8-4 and an outstanding 11-0-2 mark in ECAC play. PC tempered the loss of Granato and Michelle Johansson with a strong distribution of offensive punch. Junior Stephanie O'Sullivan finished the regular season netting 26 goals and adding 28 assists for 54 points. She was voted to the first team All-ECAC squad for her efforts. Joining her on the first team was senior Chris Bailey who had 7 goals and 16 assists (23 points) entering the playoffs. Vicki Movsessian was injured at the end of the season, but she garnered second team honors.

Adding scoring punch was freshman sensation Alison Wheeler who contributed 21 goals and 20 assists for an impressive 41

points. Defensively, the Lady Friar goaltenders (Gina Martiniello '94, Natalie Mancuso '97, and Natasha Fine '97) were nothing short of outstanding compiling a .925 save percentage and a 1.70 goals-against average in ECAC play.

After a strong regular season, the Lady Friars set their sights on another playoff run and they did not disappoint. They first took out Dartmouth at home with a 4-1 quarterfinal victory. Chris Bailey netted a pair of goals while Alison Wheeler and Steph O'Sullivan each chipped one in. Gina Martiniello was stellar with 24 saves.

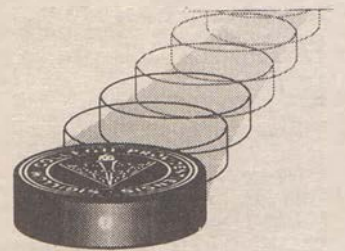
The venue then shifted to Brown University where PC decalwed their next two opponents. They

first knocked off the UNH Wildcats with a close 3-2 win. The script was much the same as the Dartmouth game as Bailey, O'Sullivan, and Wheeler again lit the red light and Martiniello was a wall in goal. Next up: the Northeastern Huskies for the championship.

For the third straight time, the Lady Friars did not fail in the title game handing a 5-2 loss to Northeastern. The win upped coach John Marchetti's career record to an awesome 264-68-7. It also meant that PC's seven seniors would go out where they belonged: on top.

While the Lady Friars women's soccer team and Friars men's basketball team were winning their first ever Big East crowns this year, this team was making

it three straight! Like the title of this article says: WOW!!! Congratulations to the entire Lady Friars ice hockey program on an outstanding season. What do you think of four strai... well, let's just enjoy the trifecta for now. Congrats again to the three-time ECAC Champions!



CHRIS BAILEY
Senior Defense
First Team All-ECAC



STEPHANIE O'SULLIVAN
Junior Left Wing
First Team All-ECAC



VICKI MOVSESSIAN
Senior Defense
Second Team All-ECAC



GINA MARTINIELLO
Senior Goaltender



LYNN MANNING
Senior Right Wing